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Die drei Bevölkerungsstufen. Ein Versuch, die Ursachen für das Blühen und Altern der Völker nachzuweisen. Von GEORG HANSEN. München, J. Lindauer, 1889. — 8vo, viii, 407 pp.

We have in this volume a sociological study of great value. It presents in a broad and scientific way the preliminary data and provisional conclusions of an investigation that is beginning to engage well-equipped students in several countries, and that is destined to yield, in the near future, results of the deepest interest, whether regarded from the standpoint of pure theory or from that of practical policy. The problem is that of the population rate in its relation to social structure and function, and to the relative well-being of social classes. This is a larger question than the one associated with the name of Malthus. It has been apparent for some time to statisticians and to physicians familiar with the physiological reactions of modern city life, that the whole philosophy of Malthusianism would have to be reconstructed. The proposition that population tends to increase beyond subsistence must be split up into several more specific propositions, from each of which a series of most interesting corollaries may be derived.

As between city and country, birth rates and death rates are conspicuously different quantities, and the same is true as to the different social classes, namely, the agricultural or land-owning population, the brain workers or middle class, and the manual laborers. Dr. Hansen has wrought the existing knowledge on these points into a systematic sociological theory. The most important parts of his data are late statistics of German cities, and especially of Munich, showing that city populations are sustained and increased only by immigration from the country. The immediate inference from this fact is one that shatters a tacit assumption which a good many writers besides the socialists have made. The three social classes are not self-perpetuating. They do not stand side by side like unmingling races, but only mark different phases in the development of the same population. Only the land-owning class is permanent; the other two are constantly disappearing, only to be as constantly renewed.

The brain-working or middle class, including the mercantile, manufacturing and capitalist classes generally, are the overflow of the land-owning class. No country without a vigorous rural population, multiplying beyond the limits of a merely agricultural life, can have a progressive middle class, and with it such characteristic features of a high civilization as accumulating capital, industrial enterprises, education, literature and art. In like manner, the manual working or wages class, including all grades from skilled mechanics to day laborers, are the overflow of the middle and to some extent of the agricultural class.

Competition, intense and increasing, is the characteristic of middle-class life, and in the struggle thousands upon thousands are worsted. Those who have physical and moral vigor left become the wage earners ; others swell the ranks of crime, insanity and suicide. The third class, in its turn, multiplies beyond its opportunities for bread winning, and the overflow becomes this time the social residuum of tramps, paupers and outcasts. The tramp, in Dr. Hansen's view, is probably the least objectionable variety that the social residuum can develop, inasmuch as the tramp does not to any great extent perpetuate his kind. The worst possible variety is the sodden wretch that continues to breed in city slums, as in East London.

Each of the three classes acquires a distinctive nature. The second class is higher than the first, being recruited from it by a process of selection that takes out the energetic, the enterprising and the intellectually keen, whose special qualities are intensified by the competition of second-class life itself. The third class, on the other hand, is lower than the first in many points besides that of economic condition. It is lower especially in reserve or potential vigor. The second class has a low birth rate and a low rate of survival. Most burgher families die out. Business is conducted for the most part by self-made men. The rapidity with which old firms disappear is a matter of common observation and is attested by statistics. In the third class, marriage is frequent and early and the birth rate is high. Bodies are ill developed, as shown by English, French and German statistics of unfitness for military service. The conditions surrounding childhood are bad. Minds and characters are unformed. The energetic and really saving workingman can often rise to the second class, but for the most part the movement from the third class is into pauperism.

Dr. Hansen's is a mind that sees easily into complicated relationships that are baffling to students generally. He develops his thesis from many points of view. The three classes are studied not only as constituent elements of society and as factors in the state, but in their historical genesis. The phenomena they exhibit are examined also as seen in each of the larger nations separately. These chapters, amounting to a philosophy of history, are full of thoughtful reflections. Most deserving of sober consideration are the comments on the brilliant but short-lived civilizations that have shone by using up, not the interest merely, but the capital of population ; and on the United States, where the natural blossoming time has been hastened, and a result that might have been incomparably magnificent has in our author's judgment been ruined, by the hot-house forcing of tariff legislation. A concluding part on the duty of the state contains some recommendations not warranted by the facts as shown, but fresh and suggestive enough to be

very welcome to readers surfeited with Georgeism and Bellamyism. The things proven seem to be : that it is desirable to maintain the agricultural population in over-multiplying vigor, whereas, in fact, it tends towards sterility ; that it is desirable to perpetuate keen competition in the second class, whereas its members try in every way to limit competition ; and that it is desirable to raise the standard of life and check the increase of the third class, whereas its natural tendencies are towards a low standard and unlimited propagation.

It will be seen that this is no ordinary book. It takes a broader view of the social problem than economists, philanthropists and writers on statecraft are wont to take, and it brings forward practical considerations of a kind that optimistic reformers would prefer to wave out of sight. The chief defect of the work is one that its author recognizes : its statistical basis is not as broad as could be wished. Yet it is broad enough to build a working hypothesis on, and that is really all that Dr. Hansen claims to do. Two other criticisms may be added. Dr. Hansen's economic views are not always sound. He has an inadequate conception of the economic reaction of urban industries upon agriculture, whereby the production of raw materials, including food, is enormously increased. His ideas are, in fact, so far wrong that he condemns agricultural colonies of unemployed workmen on the ground that whenever a vagabond is put at work an industrious man is necessarily displaced ! The other criticism relates to the author's biological knowledge. Apparently he is not familiar with some of the most important recent work in physiology, showing the effect of education, intense competition and other forms of nervous strain, upon birth rate and the vitality of offspring. In this particular, the book is less satisfactory than the brilliant *Éducation et Hérité*, by the lamented M. Guyau. It is nevertheless a book that ought to be translated and put within easy reach of all classes of readers. It is exactly what is needed to open people's eyes to the true character of much of the current social-reform literature.

F. H. GIDDINGS.

The Growth of Capital. By ROBERT GIFFEN. London, George Bell and Sons, 1889. — 8vo, 169 pp.

Of all dry statistics, economic statistics are the driest. And when they cease to be dry, *i.e.* come into connection with living questions, — as for instance the statistics of accumulated wealth and its distribution, statistics of profits, of wages, *etc.*, — they are apt to become unmanageable. Mr. Giffen has attacked, with his customary thoroughness and lucidity, one of those problems, *viz.* that of the total capital or income-bearing wealth of Great Britain ; and he has not hesitated to make the